

Friendship

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THE ENGLISH NEWSLETTER OF THE TAIWAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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TAIWAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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EDITOR'S GREETING

As we approach one of the most joyous festivals in the Christian calendar – Christmas, we have put together a rather large issue about religious festivals. Fewer than one per cent of the people living in Taiwan are nominal Christians. Many fewer are Episcopalians. So we are constantly exposed to the festivals of the Taiwan folk religions. These temples and festivals play a significant role in the spiritual and social lives of the people, in short, they provide 'community'.

For us, they are fascinating in their splendor and exoticism. Strangers are welcomed with a joyous warmth that would please our Lord. This year, close on the heels of the Taoist "chaiao" and the Confucian Day

celebrations, we were privileged to attend the celebration for the 38th Province in the Anglican Communion, the Province of Hong Kong. When it comes to Asian religious festivals, none can do it better than we!

So we have created an issue of festivals. We hope you and yours will enjoy reading our stories and reflections in your quiet moments this Christmas season. As you read them in this time of gift giving, remember to thank God for his many gifts to us, most especially this Anglican or Episcopal or Sheng Kung Hui church which nurtures us through good times and bad to the glory of God. Merry Christmas!

Elizabeth W. Green Sah, Editor

THE BISHOP'S LETTER

It was a great joy to be able to participate in the celebration of the formation of the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Province. The in the fourth formation of Anglican Provinces in south east Asia I have attended in the 10 years of my episcopacy. The three

former ones are Korea, Philippines and the Province of South-East Asia. We can see a lot of changes in this region.

We were very happy to have a team of ten delegates to participate and extend our hearty congratulations to HKSKH on this

historical moment of forming the 38th province in the Anglican Communion on behalf of our brothers and sisters of the Diocese of Taiwan. We have had a very special relationship between the church in Taiwan and the Church in HK for the last thirty or so years. Three of my predecessors were from Hong Kong. They laid a solid foundation on which we are developing our diocese. For this, we give glory to God and express our deep appreciation to the Hong Kong Province. Before HK formed the province, Bishop Kwong several times cordially invited us to join the new province. In that event the name would have been South China Sea Province. I deeply regret that we were not able to take positive action to Bishop Kwong's invitation.

I am very grateful to our Chancellor, Mr. Herbert H. P. Ma, for presenting his father's famous work to Archbishop Kwong as a special gift on the occasion that he became the first Archbishop in the history of the Church in China. Mr. Ma also graciously presented another of his father's works to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. George Carey, to express our good will to him and our deep appreciation for his outstanding leadership of the Anglican

Communion on behalf of this diocese. Mr. Ma's father's works have been collected by the National Palace Museum, which is one of the five top museums in the world.

We are most grateful to God for what He has done in HK in the last hundred and fifty years through the Anglican Church in Hong Kong. We are sincerely hoping that God will continue and richly bless HKSKH when they "reach out towards the Millenium."

It was also a privilege on behalf of the National Council of Churches in Taiwan to hold a lunch to welcome Bishop Nikitas, Metropolitan of Hong Kong and Southeast Asia, for his first brief visit to Taiwan. I think it is a rare and fresh experience for our ecumenical partners here in Taiwan. We sincerely hope that in the future the Greek Orthodox Church will choose to become an ecumenical partner to promote the gospel together here in this beautiful island.

One of our major projects this year for the diocese is to encourage clergy and lay readers to read a very popular book, "The Purpose Driven Church" written by Rich Warren. No doubt, he is using a lot of marketing strategies and techniques in building a new church. He stresses that church

growth is not the purpose of a church, but the natural outcome of a healthy, balanced development church. From the title we can see that purpose is vital to his book. In fact, the church has to think about what is the reason for its existence. Jesus' saying should be a serious warning to us – "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men." [Matt 5:13] Unchurchly people are his main concern and the major components of his new church. This demonstrates how the church has to shift from maintenance to mission. I believe that this is a serious challenge to us. He also points out that every church has to have self-understanding of it's nature, i.e. what kind of people make up this congregation, what potential does it own? Training is also a major force for his church development. Of course, Warren's background is different from ours. Our situation is in a non-Christian world with too many religions competing with each other. However, I still believe that many of his thoughts and principles are useful and adaptable to our situation.

Time flies. Advent is already here, and Christmas is about to come. This is a very special year both for Grace and myself. We celebrated my tenth anniversary with the publication of two books, "Shi Nian Gan Jieh" [Ten Years of Reflections – the Collected Letters and Speeches of The Right Rev. Dr. John C.T. Chien] and "Cottage to Cathedral, a Narrative History of the Taiwan Episcopal Church". We attended my last Lambeth, where I was awarded an honorary doctorate by my alma mater, the Virginia Theological Seminary, and our son will complete his masters course at the Florida State University, Gainesville, Florida, this year. Ya-line, our oldest daughter and her husband Timothy are in Los Angeles. Jasmine, our second daughter is enjoying her work at Carrefour Company and part time teaching at St. John's & St. Mary's Institute of Technology and Commerce. We would all like to take this opportunity to wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a Joyous New Year.

The Rt. Rev. Dr. John C.T. Chien
Bishop of Taiwan

TEACHER'S DAY

2200 YEAR OLD SACRIFICE HONORING CONFUCIUS AND THE OLD TESTAMENT SACRIFICES

In the past, many have noted a similarity between Confucianism and the Old Testament, as well as the New. Nowhere is this more striking than in the parallels between the Temple sacrifices of ancient Israel and the sacrifice at the Confucius temple in Taipei on September 28, Confucius' birthday and thus "Teacher's Day".

In both cases, large numbers of people solemnly present prepared natural products, accompanied by carefully prescribed music and ceremony, in an open-air court. Notice in both the Old Testament sacrifices and the Confucian ceremony, the killing of the animal occurs before the rite. Struggling victims, human or animal, owe more to Hollywood spectacle and Edgar Rice Burroughs than to either Scripture or anthropology.

Temple sacrifice like the Confucian ceremony, had explicit musical presentation, of which we can see some directions in the Book of Psalms, sometimes called the Hymnal of the Post-Exile Temple, directing singers and choral activity. As Judaism had a variety of sacrificing

priests [Remember John the Baptist's father, Zacharias?], the High Priest, the Levites, the servants, the various orders of singers and musicians, so too does the Confucius ceremony have various ranks of dignitaries, usually civic officials and educators, and three grades of assistants, musicians and dancers, drawn from among junior high school to college students.

In both, the participants actually wash themselves. In both, also, the prepared food is tasted by the officiating dignitaries, and the remains disposed of in a prescribed manner. Likewise, both involve multiple repetitions of music and action and beautiful objects.

There are differences, however. In the Confucius ceremony, the meat of a bull, a ram, and a boar are presented. This last would be a pollution of the Jerusalem temple were it included. Dance is an integral part of the Confucius ceremony but the Old Testament references to cultic dance seem disapproving. Confucius is honored in his ceremony, while in the Temple, God is honored in His Presence, [as the account of the

Shikenah, the Presence filling the Temple when Solomon dedicated it, shows. I Kings 8:10.] The Confucius ceremony has been celebrated annually since its restoration in 1970, while the Old Testament Temple sacrifice was offered several times each day. We as Christians are more aware of the two yearly sacrifices. These are the Passover domestic sacrifice and the Day of Atonement sacrifice in the Holy of Holies. Both are reflected upon in the New Testament, the former in Paul's letters, the latter in Hebrews.

Both the Old Testament sacrifices and the Confucius Ceremony are rooted in a long, agricultural history. The Confucius rite began in the Chou Dynasty of the Second Century, B.C., and continued into the Twentieth Century. The practice of offering food and drink to departed ancestors was firmly established in the second millenium B.C. during the Shang Dynasty as archeology attests.

It would be a double and parallel mistake to patronize animal sacrifice as quaint and outmoded by purely mental or ethical institutions in either case.

Jesus taught that the Old Covenant was "fulfilled", completed [Matt 5:7], but not 'replaced' by a newer or more sophisticated concept or practice.

"Outmoded" by a "cutting edge" concept smacks more of fashion or the physical sciences, but not of ethics or religion. Even the Old Testament prophets upheld Temple sacrifice, what they condemned in God's name was the hypocrisy of sacrificial worship without simultaneous ethical obedience to God.

Likewise, Confucius himself defended the monthly lamb sacrifice by saying "You love the Lamb, but I love the ceremony [Lun-yu 3.17]. To eliminate the sacrifice would be presumptuous and lack propriety.

It would also be hypocritical, as we wolf our pork dumplings or Big Macs and allow our white blood cells to kill microorganisms by the millions, to look down upon the occasional sacrifice of a single animal.

Some have criticized animal sacrifice as deriving from primitive bribery by the feeding of non-material gods. The psychology of either neolithic Chinese or pre-Biblical Hebrews is pure speculation. I would think that showing respect by obedience to a practice is a better description of both Old Testament Sacrifice and the Confucius Ceremony. In each case the performance of the rite is done out of homage, either to

God or to the founder and focus of the ancient and respected moral and social orientation.

It is as inappropriate to deprecate both the Confucian Ceremony and Old Testament worship, in which animal sacrifice is only one ingredient, as it is to assume that the modern Anglican believes that the novel he has given up for Lent is read with enjoyment by Christ, or that his Lenten abstinence from dessert provides a snack for God. We Anglicans, of all people, should understand the necessity of the physical in relating to God, for we believe that Christ came

in the flesh [I Tim 3:16, I Peter 4:1]. Nor do we believe that mental activity is any substitute for the physical assembling for the physical rite of consuming material elements in the Eucharist.

As do Confucionists, as did Old Testament Jews, so do we also manifest and nurture our respect through our obedience in ceremony.

Fr. Peter D'Alesandre
Father Peter has been a parish priest in the USA for 28 years. He is a student at the Mandarin Training Center of NTNU and assists Dean Lin at the Cathedral.

Pigs, Pigs, Pigs!

A fascinating part of the Ghost Month activities in Taiwan are the chaiaos. This is a celebration that rotates among 14 villages in the Taoyuan area, so it recurs in each place only once every fourteen years. Each village welcomes a visit from the gods of the largest temple in the area to the smaller temples of the village. These temples are largely Taoist with bits borrowed from Buddhism and Confucianism but this festival, at least in this form, seems to be unique to the Hakka areas of Taiwan. Dr. Richard Sah, author of this article, is the assistant director of the National

Synchrotron Radiation Center in Hsinchu and a participant both at St. John's Cathedral and The Church of the Good Shepherd English speaking congregations.

Our housing development is located in the Hakka country village of Yangmei. The Hakka are northern Chinese people who migrated to the south many years ago, and then eventually to Taiwan. The Hakka worship many gods in a sort of folk religion containing elements of many other religions. Every year, during "ghost month," one village is honored by a visit from the gods. The villages

rotate on a 14-year cycle, and this year was Yangmei's turn.

A few days earlier, we had sighted what appeared to be the world's largest pig. It was horse-like in scope. It turned out that the focus of the celebration was a pig contest. Size counts, and a big pig is in the neighborhood of 1800 pounds, nearly a ton. Amazingly, these enormous pigs are no more than two years old. Rumor has it that a big pig costs something like US\$50,000.

During the day of September 10th, there were parades and such, but we missed them. We were warned that that evening we would be subjected to the worst traffic jam in 14 years, this in a country where traffic jams are both frequent and severe. So we got home early, drove down the hill, parked, and walked around the village. We never got to the center of town - the traffic was too intimidating - but the local celebrations were centered around a small, old temple just across from the 7-11, not far from MacDonald's. We noticed pig carcasses displayed attractively in front of many store fronts. These were not business pigs, however, these were family pigs associated with family celebrations. People were in a jolly mood appropriate to the occasion.

At the temple, there were not only the expected food and souvenir stands but the carcasses of about 10 gigantic pigs and 6 goats. These corpses were displayed in a truly spectacular fashion. Each pig was stretched over a spherical form of some sort, and the goats were dressed like people (glasses, cigarettes, ties, etc.). The animals were displayed in large, gaudy display cases built conveniently on pickup trucks. The net effect was festive, bizarrely funny, and surprisingly attractive. Neon lights and shiny chrome were used with artistic flair. No-one strived for understatement.

As we walked along the streets, we chatted with various people, and at one point we were invited to eat some special holiday treats (blobs of goo made of rice flour and rolled in crushed peanut candy). Elizabeth and I ate gamely, politely complimented the chef, and were promptly invited to the Yang family banquet. So we enjoyed a marvelous banquet at a store front which prominently featured a "007" betel-nut stand. The whole Yang family (Hakkas) were out in force, and we sat with the Yang patriarch and the Chinese band, which consisted of retired Cantonese soldiers originally from the Mainland. The

whole clan could not have been nicer, and everyone seemed very taken with Elizabeth and her modest abilities with the Chinese language. We received invitations for jam sessions in our village, and we have been invited to next year's celebration in a village down the road - by the Yang's brother-in-law, I think.

After dinner (about 8:30), we went back to the temple, where the festivities were now in full swing. In a very limited space, there were

simultaneous celebrations of fireworks, several bands, a variety show, a Chinese opera, and a Taoist religious ceremony. Because of the high noise level, each group felt that it needed electronic amplification to be heard. However, this uncontrolled arms race of sorts created only a deafening and incomprehensible din. Altogether, it was quite an adventure!

Richard Chih-ping Sah

HONG KONG INAUGURATION CELEBRATION

* DELEGATES' REFLECTIONS *

As a member of the delegation of Taiwan Episcopal Church, I had the rare opportunity to participate in the celebration of the inauguration of the Province of Hongkong Sheng Kung Hui and the installation of its first archbishop and primate, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev. George L. Carey, presiding.

First of all, we were very much surprised that so many members of the churches of Hongkong Sheng Kung Hui turned out to participate in helping to greet guests at the airport, to lead them to their hotels, to guide them to the different places of meeting and

gathering, to assist them with everything they needed during their stay in Hongkong. The welcome-dinner on the 24th of October at the Renaissance Harbour View Hotel with presentation of gifts by churches from all over the world, the dinner and celebration show on the 25th at the Convention & Exhibition Centre, the fare-well-dinner at the Jumbo Floating Restaurant on the 26th, were all splendid. The highlight was of course the Inauguration Service of the Province of Hongkong Sheng Kung Hui and the installation of the Right Reverend Peter Kwong Kong Kit as

the first archbishop and primate. It was all magnificent!

I, especially, want to mention the hospitality tour on last day of our stay. We visited various diocesan projects, two which are of special interest to me. St. Stephen's College & Preparatory School was founded in 1903 and been a government subsidized secondary school since 1970. Based on Christian principles, it is one of Hongkong's best known schools, especially famous for its music department. Even more impressive was the visit to St. James' Settlement. Founded in 1949 by Bishop R.O. Hall of the Anglican Church, it began in a downtown Temple as a meeting place for young people. Now it has developed into a multi-service center for the community subsidized by the government, occupying a 12-story high building with a staff of 400 people. It's 60 service units include services for elderly persons, family and child welfare services, group & community services, rehabilitation services for the disabled, health club and dental clinic, canteen service [meal service for students and people in the community], education program, etc. Because of time limitations, we could only visit the Day Care Center for the Elderly. People over 60 who are in declining

health and have no family members to look after them, can be picked up in the morning and brought to the center. There they receive three meals, personal care, nursing care if needed, physical exercise, physiotherapy and occupational therapy, self care training and social and recreational activities. We saw them playing "Bingo". Those with difficulties are assisted by young volunteers. In the evening they are brought back to their families. Such church-operated services are worth emulating in Taiwan where there is an increasing need for them.

*Aline Siao Ma, President
Diocesan Church Women*

My Hong Kong trip from October 23-26 left me feeling that Hong Kong and Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui are really good at everything. I would like to describe my feeling by means of people, events and objects.

When my wife, Ling Shu-Yuan, and I arrived at the neatly arranged, well ordered, new Hong Kong airport, I started worrying about my itinerary. When I sighted an Episcopal priest and greeters waving the Hong Kong diocesan flag and wearing identical scarves waiting at the exit, I felt a

stream of warmth rushing from the bottom of my heart.

Before alighting from the aircraft, I felt myself deaf and dumb because I can't speak or understand Cantonese and my English is not fluent. But when I heard the receptionists start to guide me using Mandarin, my mother tongue, the rush of warmth returned. They really helped us and I never experienced the language problem I had so feared.

At the welcome banquet, Bishop Kwong, who was acting as host of the party, was very busy, moving around and receiving guests. Although I am not tall and felt short, indeed, in the crowd, I was sighted by Bishop Kwong and he tightly held my hand. I thought "the weak is helping the weak to overcome the blockade". I was filled with appreciation and the warm feelings were becoming very familiar, indeed.

At the prayer that night I said "Hello" to the Rev. Dr. Richard Honshaw whom I had met when he visited Taiwan. He told me, "I do remember you since I had a deep impression of you when we met before." Thanks be to God. I am so small to be noticed. In this big family of God, I enjoyed such encouraging and positive warmth. It just poured

over me.

The Inauguration ceremony on the 25th was really big but in good order and not rigid. It was serious and interesting. We entered this enormous space through an honor guard of students and staff in various uniforms holding directional hand signs that left us feeling honored. Music was played among the people, emotions and spirits soared. The Holy ceremony was global in its participation, so the solemn service let me pre-taste the flavor of the Cosmic Sacrement.

At the Celebration Show and Thanksgiving Dinner on the evening of the 25th, singing and dancing and speeches made me feel the active, updated and multi-fashionable aspects of Hong Kong today. I admired the detailed organization and execution of design and detail by the staff and congregation members, especially the unanimous and passionate participation. It was really hard to achieve – Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui is capable.

High population without crowding, architecturally well-ordered high rise buildings, convenient and safe pedestrian overpasses between buildings that leave you feeling you are walking on air, underground rail networks with fresh air and high speed

so that you don't feel you are underground at all – we have much to admire in contemporary Hong Kong.

Only a couple of days in Hong Kong left me with a deep and good image and some lasting insights. I should grab at every good chance to step out into a wider world. To get rid of the fear of new contact cleanses my soul and leaves me with renewed energy and joy to pursue God's work.

Having been treated as an honored guest and having been given a rich learning opportunity, the first thing in my mind is "Thank you" and the second is "Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui is really good at everything!"

Rev. Luke H. H. Chen,

Chen Hung Hsing

St. Paul's Church, Kaohsiung

After experiencing three periods of changes, thankfully and by the grace of God, Hong Kong Episcopal Church has become the 38th province of the worldwide Anglican Communion. My wife, Ling Shu Ing, and I were honored to participate in the entire celebration program as members of the Diocese of Taiwan delegation. I would like to share some of our thoughts after

attending the two-and-a-half-day activities.

1. Sharing of Love

a. Each individual or couple coming from areas outside Hong Kong, no matter what status, gender or age, was welcomed with timely reception and care based on the love in Christ. The program organizer arranged pre-assigned host/hostess to serve the visitors starting from arrival in the airport to providing hearty assistance and language translation. Their services were motivated from the bottom of their hearts so that the visitors could fully enjoy the warmth of the fellowship in Christ.

b. After riding the shuttle bus to hotel and going through registration process, we were handed a package full of materials, including a complete description of the program, a Compact Disc of the celebration music, a badge for attending the consecration ceremony and tickets for meals during the program. When moved into our comfortable hotel rooms, we were even more impressed by the sincere warmth of the celebration program and diligent planning and design of the organizing committee.

c. The highest point revealing the sharing spirit in Christ was at the

reception dinner. Regards, wishes, and sharing as being parts of the body of Jesus Christ were delivered through gifts brought from different areas, denominations and churches everywhere in the world. Grand Justice, Mr. Ma, presented a precious Chinese water painting - the Bamboo, by his father, the late great painter, Ma Shou-Hwa, to archbishop Kwong. All the participating guests greatly praised the painting. Archbishop Kwong, speaking for the Hong Kong Episcopal Church, said that the love and caring expressed in all the gifts and good wishes of the guests and their respective constituencies, are very precious to them and will be greatly treasured.

2. Witness of Harmony and Joy in God

Throughout the celebration activities, we deeply felt the meaning of "maintaining order in the chaos" This could only result from very thoughtful planning. In every event during the program days, such as the reception dinner and consecration ceremony, members of all three dioceses that make-up the Province of Hong Kong and its parish churches all worked harmoniously and joyfully. The archbishop, clergy and laity all demonstrated their faith in God

through their work to witness to the grace of God and joyful life from Heaven.

3. Action for Thanksgiving

During one hundred and fifty years of blessed service, Hong Kong Province has planted more than fifty churches and missionary stations, established one hundred and twenty-eight schools, including kindergartens, primary schools and middle schools, and one hundred and eighty-five institutions for social services. With their grateful hearts, they are determined to proceed "Spreading God's Word through Ministry and Service, In Matched Pace We March Towards the Millennium." I believe that Hong Kong Province will achieve what they pray to God to do in order to honor Him and benefit His people.

*Rev. David Lai, Lai Rong Hsin
Grace Episcopal Church, Tainan*

It was a great privilege for me to join Bishop Chien and other delegates of Taiwan Episcopal Church, to attend the celebration for the inauguration ceremony of the Province of Hong Kong Sheng-Kung-Hui. During this visit I deeply felt the working of amazing grace. I better understood

why the disciple said in Corinthians I “If one part is given special honor, all parts enjoy it,” and I, once again, appreciated what is meant by “we are all members of the Episcopal family.”

This ceremony is such a special occasion not only for Hong Kong Sheng-Kung-Hui, but also for the world Anglican Communion, and for the worldwide Chinese Christian community as well. After this ceremony, the thirty-eighth province of the Anglican Communion was born. Being installed, as the first Archbishop and the Primate of Hong Kong Province, Bishop Peter Kwong is also the first Chinese Archbishop. This event will become a significant page in Chinese Christian history.

During this visit, all of us visitors were extremely impressed by the warm hospitality and thoughtfulness of the hosting church. Beginning from the frequent communication far before the ceremony, the thorough preparation of all the information and materials, the well planned and organized programs and activities, -all of these revealed the thoughtfulness and wisdom of the hosting church. It left to us an unforgettable happy memory and great thankfulness. In addition to sharing the great joy of this celebration, as one of the member of Taiwan Episcopal

Church delegation, I had other, somewhat mixed, feelings and fell into deep thoughts. I thought about the direction and the future of Taiwan Sheng-Kung-Hui, and felt a little bit puzzled and worried.

As Archbishop Kwong emphasized again and again, the formation of Hong Kong Province has been led by God’s mercy and the Holy Spirit. However, without the devotion, hard work, and dedication of all the clergy and the lay members of the Episcopal churches in Hong Kong, the celebrations would not have been possible. Hong Kong Sheng-Kung-Hui have set a mission statement for their churches - “Spreading God’s word through ministry and service, in matched pace we march towards the millennium.”. They have demonstrated their collaborated efforts heading for the guidepost. How about us - the Episcopal Church of Taiwan? Our vision? Our mission? Our devotion?

After I returned to Taipei, my joy of attending this ceremony was covered by deep reflection. May God also have mercy on us and lead us in matched pace toward the future.

*Dean Samuel Lin[Ling Ying-Chiu]
St. John’s Cathedral, Taipei*

We were very much impressed by the over-all orderly organization of the whole program, especially by the grandeur of the service and the generous hospitality to everyone from abroad from the time of arrival to the time of departure. We were even more impressed by Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui's ability to muster its manpower and assets – a demonstration of clerical and lay leadership at its best.

Taiwan Sheng Kung Hui's participation in the celebration was high-lighted by the presentation of two bamboo-paintings done by my father, the late Hon. Ma Shou-Hua – one to Archbishop Peter Kwong and the other to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Reverend George Carey, who preached at the Inauguration service. Though a judge by profession, my father was better known as a leading contemporary artist of the traditional Chinese school. Most of his works of art are now in the permanent collection of the National Palace Museum in Taipei. Such gifts are intended to bring to the two archbishops the best wishes of the Taiwan Sheng Kung Hui.

While we enjoyed sharing the happy experience of celebrating this historical event, our thoughts did not end there. More thoughts have just begun – thoughts about how Hong

Kong Sheng Kung Hui as a church with one diocese came to be a church with three dioceses and then a province, and what we, the Taiwan Sheng Kung Hui, can learn therefrom. We have learned that Hong Kong's success is the result of the devotion and dedication of so many people to a common goal. It is decades of their concerted hard work bearing fruit. But as Archbishop Kwong himself said all this would have been futile without God willing and guiding. All of which reminds me of St. Augustin's pregnant saying, "Without God, we cannot; without us, God will not." So let us co-operate with God in prayer toward a common goal of building up Taiwan Sheng Kung Hui..

*The Hon. Herbert Han-Pao Ma,
Chancellor
President of the Standing Committee
Diocese of Taiwan*

As a layman in the Taiwan Episcopal Church, I was very honored to have had the opportunity to attend the Inauguration of the Province of Hong Kong. There were impressive and grand ceremonies, solemn rituals, a spectacular show and banquet, and above all, the fabulous hospitality of

the Hong Kong Church and its members.

However, it must be said that the beauty and grandeur of the occasion were not in themselves, of great importance to me as a Christian. I love our church because of the Christian behavior of its members. Therefore, as proud as I was to witness this most important and auspicious ceremony, the pageantry was of secondary importance. Instead, what touched me most was the manifest joy and pride of the Hong Kong clergy and laymen in their beloved church. I was deeply grateful to have been able share this overwhelmingly joyous occasion.

Also, as the grandson of a

Chinese Episcopalian missionary, I was very aware of the profound historical significance of the inauguration, especially in the light of the recent turnover of Hong Kong to China. I'm sure that my grandfather would have been pleased to see Bishop Kwong installed as the first Chinese archbishop of a Chinese province in China.

*Richard Chih-Ping Sah, Ph.D..
Assistant Director.
National Synchrotron Radiation
Center*

ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL

During the last few weeks, the English language congregation of the Cathedral has had visits from many former members now living overseas.

Steve and Meiling Jones of Maryland [USA] made a brief visit to Taiwan to visit Meiling's father who is ill, and they brought their two children to church.

Andreas of Germany replaced our devoted organists on two Sundays and treated us to a Bach prelude.

Heyward Learn was in Taiwan, and will return for another week or two in November.

Owen, a business consultant from Ireland, has been attending during his stay in Taiwan.

I am an American Episcopal priest. Dean Lin is my host and benefactor for my ten months stay while I study at ShiTa, and has permitted me to preach and concelebrate.

The bulk of the congregation and liturgical leaders continues to be the faithful from the Philippines whose friendliness and enthusiasm enriches the service for me.

This journal's editor, Elizabeth Green, and her husband, Richard

Sah, are the monthly "Birthday god-parents", providing monthly cakes and song. [No, they do not wear costumes for their festive fellowship hours.]

Sunday, October 18 was especially joyful, for it was the celebration of the first birthday of our youngest parishioner – Harry Eze, Jr.

Fr. Peter D'Alesandre

Good Shepherd Church Taipei

New starting time of 9:30 am for English Service

A change in the English Service time was decided upon to allow for a better outreach to families and other peoples in the foreign community,, Also the Sunday School has been restarted and meets at the same time as the service. It is hoped that these changes will bring same growth for the English Speaking Congregation. In addition new leaflets have been produced about our church. These show parking spots near the church, a monthly prayer sheet, rota of duties, congregational list and a general leaflet with the Church's Mission Statement for the information of new members. In November some of the congregation manned a kiosk/stall to publicise our

church at the Taipei American School Food Fair. This together with other public community events and information sheets have enabled Good Shepherd Church to be better known and easier to find.

Concert

Richard Saunders, who assists with Sunday music, is a very fine pianist and teaches in Taipei. He gave a wonderful concert in the church and all the proceeds went to the SOS village. The audience was well treated to a most beautiful repertoire of enjoyable music. Richard is not only an inspiring concert pianist but a walker. He has just had a book published locally of different walks in

and around Taipei it is well worth buying.

Special Services

This year in conjunction with One World Week and The Week of Prayer for World Peace a special Liturgy was celebrated as our own Peace Day Service. All the prayers, readings and hymns used non militaristic language and symbols to emphasise the Gospel Message of Shalom. It was a very moving and exhilarating spiritual experience to really concentrate upon the heart of the Gospel message itself. The peace was passed at the end of the service after singing the last hymn with the congregation joining and linking arms. This emphasised that having received God's peace that there was a pastoral responsibility to act upon it as one.

The combined Kinkaseki Memorial and Remembrance/Veterans Day service was very well attended. The events began at the church and later continued in the small village north of Taipei on the site of the former prison mine. It brought us all together to give thanks and commemorate those who had suffered so much in wars. Five men and their family members returned from Australia, Hong Kong and the United Kingdom to pay tribute especially to

their former comrades who had been fellow prisoners of war in that place. As with other camps around the world its story is very sad and horrific. To know and realise how brutal and inhuman one person can be to another is a salutary reminder of the depravity to wish a person can deteriorate and the challenge that poses and offers to Christians to be peacemakers. For many the memory of such things is beyond bearing even 50 years after the suffering finally ended. One is reminded of how much care and love the Church must show in practical ways to those who had lived through such dread. We are bidden by Christ to help with the life long healing and reconciliation that is needed for these people to see any future. It is humbling to be thanked by survivors and told that the day was appreciated even by those whose faith had been obliterated by such an experience.

Farewells & Welcomes

In December we will be saying our Good Byes to Rosemary and David Gill and their family who are going to Turkey and Chris Young who is returning to Canada. We wish to say thank you to all at them for their help and assure them of our prayers as they go, Angelus Cozart and Bill Bryson will be leaving the Vestry in the New

Year and with Rosemary also gone a brand new team is lined up. David Trebing, Cathy Tyng and Mark Olhson

will be taking their places with John Hill as an alternative. The New Year will be new.

TAICHUNG

In the absence of an English language chaplain, the lay members of the St. James English speaking

congregation have continued their services and ministry and the English speaking congregation is growing.

CHRISTIAN AMONG OTHER BELIEVERS

The Editor of Friendship has kindly asked me to write again about my sabbatical visit to Hong Kong, Taiwan, S. Korea, Tokyo and Shanghai during Spring, 1998. This time, she asked me to reflect not only about my time in Taiwan, as I did in my last article, but on the trip as a whole. Since my experience was so rich and meaningful, I have several reflections to share. I hope the editor will let me share a different reflection for several upcoming issues. And, since I am a theology teacher, my reflections have a theological aspect. May I share the following reflection.

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In North America, Christianity is the prevailing religion. Of course, because of Asian immigration and Near East immigration, Buddhism and Islam have many members in North America. And Judaism is an influential religious group in the United States. It is possible in large American cities to see a Mosque or a Buddhist Center. But, generally, we American Christians don't experience daily the presence, influence and truth claims of other world religions. It is easy for us to imagine that everyone who is religious is Christian!

It was important for me, therefore, to experience first hand that Christianity is not the only religion.

One of the ways this experience came home to me was seeing Buddhist Monasteries in Taiwan, S. Korea and Shanghai, and Shinto Shrines in Tokyo. This helped me to understand that Christians in Taiwan know first hand that for many if not most of their fellow citizens, the truth, the value, the significance of Christian faith and practice is not obvious to all.

I indeed, my time in Asia helped me to understand better that Asian Christians may also have to bear the burden of appearing to many as being part of a foreign religion, indeed a religion brought originally to Asia by western colonial powers. Therefore, I had an opportunity to see how being a Christian in the Asian setting has extra burdens that it does not have for me in the west.

A second way I experienced the challenge to Christian faith and witness in the Asian context was encountering people who rejected the value of religion completely. In Shanghai, I met people who were declared Marxists and therefore atheists. In connection with my interest in the relation between science

and religion, I accepted an invitation to tour one of Shanghai's scientific universities. A young graduate student escorted me around, explaining the different parts of the university. During the tour she asked me what I taught. I said I taught Christian doctrine. She said, "well, of course, religious faith is all ridiculous."

Of course, one can hear people willing to declare themselves atheists and to criticize religion in the United States. But I was experiencing atheism and rejection of the value of religion as an official, national doctrine, part of a whole project of nation building. That gave me a new insight into what it might mean to be a witnessing Christian in China.

If the Editor has space in the next Issue of Friendship, I would like to share another experience I had. On two occasions I found myself in a situation where I had to give personal testimony to my faith.

*David C. Scott,
Professor of Theology and Ethics
Virginia Theological Seminary*

ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH – HUALIEN

When I first arrived in Hualien, I attended the English service at the Roman Catholic church, unaware that we had a church in Hualien. However, when I visited Taipei, then Dean Michael Liu at the Cathedral gave me the address and telephone number of the only Episcopal/Anglican Church in the eastern part of Taiwan. Even so, it took a long time to reach Rev. Samuel Liao, who readily encouraged us, the Filipinos in the area, to come. The first time we attended the service, Bishop and Mrs. John Chien were visiting Hualien. Although the service was in Chinese and we couldn't follow, it was a good beginning. Thanks be to God, because the next Sunday the English service at St. Luke's began. A million thanks to Rev. Samuel Liao, or Father Liao as we popularly address him, for his understanding of our spiritual needs. He sacrifices to have another service [English] after the Chinese service.

Last September some of our Filipino friends from St. John's Cathedral in Taipei visited us. They were surprised to find out that our priest here speaks English fluently. We had a wonderful worship service with them.

Six months after the beginning of the English service, Bishop and Mrs. Chien, together with some friends, like Dr. Andrew Chang, the president of St. John's and St. Mary's College of Technology visited us. We had a great service with 25 Filipinos in attendance. After the service, we shared coffee with our guests before we parted.

The first Sunday of Advent, 22 theological students [Aborigines] from the Presbyterian seminary joined us in our service. The church was so full some of us had to stand. Their minister preached and after him I was called by Rev. Liao to share, which I did. It was not difficult and I enjoyed sharing with them. They and their aboriginal brothers and sisters in northern Philippines have much in common. We enjoyed that wonderful fellowship.

The English congregation goal is to expand our members and to make ourselves multi-racial. Presently, most of us are from the northern Philippines. We know we can do this because the Lord is in our midst. We also look forward to a great Christmas celebration on the 27th of December. All are invited to join us.

Peter P Aclopen

Lay Reader

MODERN MARTYRS

Excerpted from THE TIMES of July 9, 1998

Just before the convocation of the Lambeth Conference, Archbishop George Carey unveiled ten statues in Westminster Abbey. These represent ten people designated as 20th century martyrs. They were chosen because of their "openness to death for the glory of Christ". Among these was China's Wang Zhiming.

Wang Zhiming was executed in December 1973 at a rally of more than 10,000 Chinese Christians who had been forced to attend in an attempt to frighten them into submission. In 1981 a memorial was erected to him in Wuding County, the only known monument in China erected to commemorate a Christian killed during the Cultural Revolution.

Wang was educated in mission schools and ordained as a pastor in 1951. He showed loyalty to the state but refused to take part in "denunciation" meetings. In the ten years following 1966, churches were closed and Christians met secretly. At least 21 Christian leaders in Wuding were interned and many denounced, beaten, and sent to camps.

Wang was arrested in 1969, aged 66, with members of his family. His wife survived after an imprisonment of three years, two sons were imprisoned for nine years, a third son reportedly committed suicide. In 1980, Wang was "rehabilitated" after it was recognized that the policy to destroy religion had failed.

CHRISTMAS MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDING BISHOP AND THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

"Let the Son of God grow in you, for he is formed in you. Let him become very great--immense -- in you... and may he become to you a great smile and exaltation and perfect joy which no one can take from you." These words from a 12th century abbot, Isaac de l'Etoile, invite us to reflect again on what we can only dimly comprehend because of its immensity, the mystery, the truth too large for our

hearts and minds to contain: Incarnation.

When God speaks with the full force of God's eternal and unbounded love for the whole creation, the word spoken overleaps the boundaries of speech and becomes event. "The Word became flesh and lived among us," declares the Gospel of John. And in virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, what happened two

thousand years ago continues to unfold in the lives of those who have been baptized into Christ's body. Through the ceaseless motion of the Holy Spirit, the Word who is Christ is spoken into flesh and blood in us, and our lives become the medium, the stuff, of divine self-disclosure.

"It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2:20). Paul's bold assertion is a truth each one of us must make our own as it works its way into the fabric of our lives through the ebb and flow of events and circumstances, and demands and decisions which constitute our existence and relationships.

There is nothing remote or abstract about incarnation, nor does God in Christ wait for us to achieve some pristine state before declaring us home to his fullness and "grace upon grace." For as the risen One said to Paul, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9).

As we celebrate Christ's birth, may we both personally and as a community of faith welcome the One who so profoundly welcomes us by sharing his life and his love, and proclaims week by week, "This is my body; this is my blood given and shed

for you: eat and drink. Live in me as I live and love in you and through you that all may be one and all things made new." And may Christ so grow and be formed in us all that he becomes a great smile and exaltation and perfect joy. A blessed Christmas to you all.

*The Most Rev. Frank T. Griswold, III
Presiding Bishop, ECUSA*

Once again, we are approaching Christmas and Eileen and I are delighted to be able to send our greetings to you all, wherever you are and in whatever way you will be celebrating this great feast of God's love and hope.

The Lambeth Conference, which has been such a central part of our lives as a Communion this past year, brought home to me more forcefully than ever, the extraordinary and wonderful diversity of our witness in the world today as Anglicans. Few who were in Canterbury in the Summer will forget the marvelous worship in which we were invited to participate, praising God and participating in his feast in so many different styles and languages, and yet profoundly united as we stood side by side, our hearts and minds focussed on

the mystery of that divine love. And we also discovered new things about one another as we sat together in small groups sharing stories of ministry and mission in so many different contexts. Many of us were inspired by the stories of courage, faithfulness and steadfastness that emerged from the church in Africa and Asia and South America, where challenges to our faith can often be so sharp.

I personally will never forget the fellowship I had with Bishop Daniel Zindo--a dear friend--in our bible study group and in personal conversation. Sadly this marvelous Christian, Dean of the Province of Sudan, was killed in a car accident just a few weeks ago. He leaves an extended family of 23 orphans to be cared for. The agony of Sudan seems to be without end.

On the other hand, we found too, from time to time, that the diversity of our experience and histories brought us into confrontation with one another. That, for many of us was a painful experience, and one which will live with us for a long time.

But these experiences are the reality of life and, indeed, part of family life. As Christians we are not protected from the challenges and the disputes of the world and we should

not be looking for an easy ride! What we do have however is an extra gift as we face the questions and the troubles. We have the gift of the infant Christ, a symbol of humility, of vulnerability, of openness; and we have the message of the angel who invites us to Bethlehem, to the House of Bread, "Do not be afraid". We must wrestle with the world and all its questions, but if we are determined to continue to walk side by side to the manger, humble and open in our journeying we will be walking in the Spirit, and we have nothing of which to be afraid.

So to the people of Honduras and Nicaragua, who are so much in our prayers, to the people of Iraq and the Middle East, to the people of the Philippines and the people of Sudan--indeed to all my brothers and sisters in Christ, so many of whom are suffering in different ways, I offer thanks to God for your witness and faith, and I pray that Jesus Christ, "who by his incarnation, gathered into one all things earthly and heavenly," will fill you all with joy and peace, and that he will bless us all in the year which is to come.

*The Most Rev. George C. Carey
Archbishop of Canterbury*